SOUTH TANGIPAHOA PARISH PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2026 9:00AM
CITY HALL ANNEX BUILDING - 110 W. HICKORY ST., PONCHATOULA, LA

The regular meeting was held on Wednesday, August 12, 2026 at the City Hall Annex Building, located at 110 W. Hickory Street, Ponchatoula, LA. President Daryl Ferrara called the regular meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

The invocation was given by administrative assistant, Robyn Pusey, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Secretary Rhonda Sheridan.

Commissioners present: Daryl Ferrara, Tina Roper, Tim DePaula, Rhonda Sheridan, Logan Davis, Brandon Schanzbach

Commissioners absent: William Sims

President Ferrara welcomed everyone to the meeting. Others in attendance included Patrick Dufresne, STPPC Executive Director; Robyn Pusey, Administrative Assistant; Andre Coudrain, Cashe Coudrain and Bass; Lee Barends, ITL Accounting; Brandi Fontenot, GIS Engineering, LLC; Richard Meek, Action 17 News.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

It was moved by Vice President Roper and seconded by Treasurer DePaula that the South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission approve the regular meeting agenda for August 12, 2026, as presented. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

President Ferrara told the commissioners that the meeting minutes from July 8, 2026 were in their meeting folders. After a brief review, a motion was made by Treasurer DePaula and seconded by Vice President Roper to adopt/approve the minutes from the regular meeting on July 8, 2026. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

TREASURER'S REPORT

Today there are two months of financial reports to be reviewed as port accountant Lee Barends had been out of town for the last STPPC meeting. Ms. Barends started with the June "Compared with Budget" financial report and said the income for June (rounded) was $147,453.00, expenses were $75,900.00 with a net income of $71,553.00. She said the year-to-date income through June net profit was $563,983.00. She said at that time the checking account balance was $459,308.00 and the assets were listed on the balance sheet as well.

Ms. Barends said the in a couple of months there will be a need to make a proposed amended budget to address some overages with professional contracts and engineering. Also to be amended include membership and dues, office supplies, and any income expenses regarding any of the projects currently going on. There were no questions regarding the June financials. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Vice President Roper to accept and approve the financial reports from June 2026 as presented by port accountant Lee Barends of ITL Accounting. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Ms. Barends continued with the July 2026 financial reports, starting with the "Compared with Budget" report, stating that revenue for July (rounded) was $141,386.00, and the expenses were $320,076.00 due to a big insurance payment. She said the insurance will be another line item to be addressed, as it was slightly over the budget, however, is paid in full. This leaves is a negative balance for the month of $178,689.00 but the year-to-date profit is $385,293.00. She said at the end of July the bank balance was $271,355.00 and she did not recommend making a transfer of funds this month. There were no questions regarding the July financial reports. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Vice President Roper to accept and approve the financial reports from July 2026 as presented by port accountant Lee Barends of ITL Accounting. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

President Ferrara noticed the Edward Jones account portfolio had increased and asked if one of the CD's had been transferred into the account. There was a brief discussion about the due dates of the CD's to be transferred, and it was noted that one CD was transferred in June and one at the end of July.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Warehouse Buildings #2 & #3 – lease agreement and inspection update**
    a) **Spreadsheet review**
    b) **Resolution**

Port director Patrick Dufresne said the updated maintenance repair spreadsheets had been forwarded to the commissioners. Vice President Roper stopped Mr. Dufresne and said she did not receive the spreadsheet until late in the day before the meeting. She said she had asked Mr. Dufresne for a plan of action with a prioritized repair list to review before obtaining bids. Mr. Dufresne had obtained three bids which were sent to the commissioners before the spreadsheets were sent. Vice President Roper told Mr. Dufresne she wanted him to speak with the maintenance people at the port and get them to make a prioritized list of repairs, because items on the spreadsheet were not in any particular order. Mr. Dufresne commented that he was the maintenance person. Treasurer DePaula questioned Vice President Roper if she meant how to determine the order that repairs should be done, and said he felt the only way to figure this out would be to speak with the person who would do the repairs, or an engineer. She did not think an engineer was necessary. Vice President Roper said when she had received the bids she had no clue what was being bid on, because they did not specify the repairs. Mr. Dufresne said that the bids were determined from the Arcane inspection report of the warehouses, which included everything to be repaired. He said that was the basis for the bids and then suggested hiring a professional engineer to complete the repairs. Vice President Roper didn't think hiring a professional engineer was necessary and suggested going back to Arcane and have the top ten repairs prioritized. She said that the list should be more prioritized and she wanted to see something more specific before agreeing to expensive repairs. She said that this was just her opinion and not the rest of the board. Mr. Dufresne said he could ask the inspection person with Arcane to provide his top ten repairs.

President Ferrara asked Mr. Dufresne, based on the lease, if the repairs are the responsibility of the port, or the tenant. Mr. Dufresne said in his opinion the port is responsible for the repairs in warehouse building 2 because it was in need of repairs when the tenant moved in. Port attorney Andre Coudrain told the commissioners that during the lease discussions, the tenant would look at the data and determine what they think represents some sort of gentleman's agreement; that they would complete the repairs without an acknowledgement that it was their legal responsibility to do so. He said as part of the lease discussion, that they will likely go back and look at some of the items that they think is their responsibility.

Treasurer DePaula said he assumed the inspection report had been provided to the bidders, and Mr. Dufresne confirmed that it had. Treasurer DePaula suggested attaching the repair schedule to the bid documents. A lengthy discussion followed among the commissioners about how the repairs should be prioritized, whether each item on the spreadsheets required repair, the need for cost breakdowns, and whether the work should be overseen by a contractor or an engineer. Treasurer DePaula said there were two separate issues: first, whether all repairs on the list were necessary, and second, in the act of selecting the bid, that everything the commission wants done encompasses everything stated in the bids. He said this could be easily reviewed with the contractor. Commissioner Davis asked whether Mr. Dufresne would handle quality control for the projects. Treasurer DePaula said he did not believe Mr. Dufresne was qualified for that role and that, ideally, a qualified engineer should oversee the work. Vice President Roper said she did not want to pay $135 per hour for an engineer and suggested that someone such as a general contractor could certify the work. The spreadsheets showed repairs to be done by both the port and tenant, and were not prioritized. She said she wanted a spreadsheet showing only the port repairs to be completed and said the bids should be based directly on that repair spreadsheet. Mr. Dufresne said the electrical components had been removed from the spreadsheet report. Commissioner Davis asked whether a certain number of repairs had to be completed to avoid the port breaching any obligation. Mr. Coudrain said there was no indication of a breach unless a repair clearly within the port's responsibility made the premises untenable. Discussion continued. Vice President Roper said she wanted a clear itemization of the repairs so the commission could see exactly what would be fixed. Treasurer DePaula said he thought the bidding contractor should be asked to itemize the work. Vice President Roper said that, when the maintenance report was first issued, she had asked Mr. Dufresne to discuss it with the Arcane inspector and prioritize repairs based on what could be completed when funding was available and what needed to be addressed immediately to maintain the building. Mr. Dufresne referred to a "top 10" list, and Vice President Roper said the number could be 25 or 50, but she did not know. She said the commission needed a starting point before seeking bids, so that bidders could itemize and price their responses, rather than submitting a general bid up to a certain amount. She said she felt the spreadsheet report needed to be narrowed further before moving forward. Mr. Dufresne said he would do so. President Ferrara asked Vice President Roper for a motion. She said the motion would be to table the resolution and have Mr. Dufresne obtain an itemized and prioritized list so contractors would know exactly what they were expected to bid on. She also told Mr. Dufresne to revise the spreadsheet to show only the port repairs. Mr. Coudrain said there was no certainty at that point about which repairs were the tenant's responsibility but said we can work off the list and have further discussion about it if needed. Treasurer DePaula asked who made the determination of the port and tenant repairs, and Mr. Dufresne said he did. Mr. Coudrain said they made the determination with the tenant, however, the tenant questioned some of the repairs, and while they agreed to fix it, they did not want this to be an admission that forever this kind of repair is their responsibility. More discussion was had about some of the repairs on the spreadsheet. Vice President Roper asked if the electricals would be bid out separately, and Mr. Dufresne said yes, separate.

A motion was made by Vice President Roper, seconded by Treasurer DePaula, to table the resolution for today and for port director, Patrick Dufresne to obtain an itemized and prioritized list of the maintenance repairs to be reviewed for bids. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Mr. Dufresne said he could not guarantee that he would have the information by the next meeting. If that happens, Vice President Roper said that would be fine, that he should let the commission know he is still working on it. She asked Mr. Dufresne to speak with the Arcane inspector to get his recommendations for the top repairs to be completed from the list.

2. LA-DOTD Port Priority Program Application - Projects - update

Mr. Dufresne introduced Brandi Fontenot of GIS Engineering. Ms. Fontenot said they are currently in the preliminary design and permit phase of the projects, that there are 2 separate teams working on site drainage improvements and culvert replacement, and another team working on the 3-slip boat house. She gave a brief overview of these projects and their current status to the commissioners. She said the culvert design at the port entrance is completed and they are working on how to sequence this as to not to close the driveway or shutdown operations for the tenant. President Ferrara and Vice President Roper asked what the plan is if this happened, would it be a few days or over a weekend. Ms. Fontenot said she wasn't sure that it could be done over a weekend if done with concrete, that they are going to try and sequence it so that only half of the drive is closed off, and the tenant can use the other half while they wait for the concrete to cure. She reviewed a design worksheet with the commissioners, showing the work being done and the preliminary plan for the next 6 -9 months. She said they are working to expedite everything as quickly as possible. Ms. Fontenot reported that YKH is working on the fire suppression system for warehouse building 2 and said they may need 5 weeks to get through their study and report phase to give their system recommendations. President Ferrara asked if the boat launch would be expanded, and Mr. Dufresne said yes, it is being doubled in size. She said they are making progress, and if there were any questions to let her know.

3. Barge dock repair project – update

Mr. Dufresne said there was another invoice today from the project engineer. He said this invoice will put the port over the current limit of $215,000.00 for the services, and there are a couple more invoices due. Port attorney Andre Coudrain said some of the fees involve the litigation and recommended it to be discussed in executive session. There were no questions.

4. 5-Year Master Plan – update

Mr. Dufresne said since the last STPPC meeting he met with Dr. James Richardson to discuss the Master Plan update. Dr. Richardson told him that preliminary research had begun, and that they (Dr. Stephen Barnes, Dr. Anna Osland and himself) would be attending the meeting on September 9th. Mr. Dufresne said the administrative assistant would advertise the meeting, and Vice President Roper suggested posting this on the STPPC website, as well as getting the parish and Ponchatoula chamber to post information on their social media accounts. She said she would like to see more people attend than just the dedicated few that show up.

5. Employee handbook manual – update

Vice President Roper said that Commissioner Sims was supposed to investigate getting someone to help with the handbook, however Commissioner Sims is absent today. She said at the previous meeting it was suggested to find an HR group that could go through the handbook and see what the governor's orders are (and how they apply to the STPPC). Mr. Coudrain said the way the commission is set up, the governor's order is not binding and explained briefly why it doesn't apply. He said the commission is then available to negotiate whatever is reasonable. Vice President Roper said she would get with Commissioner Sims to find a company who can manage the HR manual. Secretary Sheridan said there is a company in Baton Rouge that did the city's manual around 2 years ago and she would forward their information to her. Vice President Roper said we need to be sure that we are not missing any federal regulations or any state regulations that needs to be in the manual.

6. Bayou Signs – lease update

Mr. Coudrain said that at a prior meeting, the commission approved assignment of the Bayou Signs lease subject to his review. He said Bayou Signs wants to assign the lease to The Lamar Companies; however, we want to be sure Lamar affirmatively agrees to assume the obligations of the lease. He said this opened a discussion as to whether the Bayou Signs lease is a market lease and is there an opportunity to adjust the rate now, and if so, would Lamar require an extension of the lease. He said he was told by Lamar representatives that the current rate is the market rate, and they wouldn't be interested in paying more just to extend the term of the lease. Mr. Coudrain said he didn't think there was more rent to be obtained. He will have Lamar Companies sign a revised form of the agreement that states Lamar specifically assumes the obligations of the Bayou Signs lease. There were no questions.

7. Invoice Payment Approval

The following invoices for payment were presented today for approval by Treasurer DePaula:

Cashe Coudrain & Bass
Services rendered through July 31, 2026

Inv# 134136 Matter # 4623-1 Amt. $ 1,736.64
STPPC General

Inv# 134137 Matter # 4623-13 Amt. $ 7,981.00
STPPC vs. Wilco Marsh Buggies

Inv# 134250 Matter # 4623-0014 Amt. $ 420.00
Lease with Bayou Diesel – Building's 2 & 3

Total Amt. $ 10,137.64

After reading the first invoice, Treasurer DePaula made a motion to approve. Secretary Sheridan asked if each invoice for Cashe Coudrain & Bass would be approved separately. Treasurer DePaula said normally he wouldn't approve each invoice separately; however, he thought the litigation invoice should potentially not be made public. Mr. Coudrain agreed and said that sometimes the invoice billing description may have litigation strategies in the notes. He suggested once the commission privately reviews the invoice then the text could be redacted as far as a public record. Treasurer DePaula made a motion to approve Cashe Coudrain & Bass invoice #134136 in the amount of $1,736.64 and invoice # 134252 in the amount of $420.00, both seconded by Secretary Sheridan. Treasurer DePaula said again he does not want the litigation invoice to be part of the public record. Mr. Coudrain said, for example, if the port was to receive a public records request, the text description could be redacted (from the invoice). Treasurer DePaula said, "because it's attorney-client". It was agreed to move discussion of invoice # 134137 to executive session.

Ragland Aderman & Associates
Inv# 492023021.26.3 Amt. $ 34,230.00
Professional Engineering Services Apr 1 – May 31, 2026
Structural engineering services for confirmation of Barge Dock 2
Corps of Engineers permit & prep of construction drawings for
dock repairs and improvements

Mr. Dufresne said this invoice puts the port over the limit (for engineering). Mr. Coudrain said that the port's engineer has been asked to provide what he reasonably projects to be his work in the litigation. Treasurer DePaula said this would be discussed (in executive session). He said as far as this invoice is concerned, this money is owed to Mr. Ragland, and Vice President Roper said the invoice description was not as specific as the litigation invoice. Treasurer DePaula recommended paying the invoice and discussing it further in executive session. A motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach to approve payment for the invoice presented today for Ragland Aderman & Associates in the amount of $34,230.00. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Vice President Roper questioned if the invoices for Cashe Coudrain & Bass were going to be approved, as she didn't think any motion was made. Treasurer DePaula stated he said that the port should pay the 2 invoices (that were not litigation), and Secretary Sheridan said she had seconded the motion. It was unanimously agreed by the commission to approve invoice #134136 in the amount of $1,736.64 and invoice # 134252 in the amount of $420.00 to Cashe Coudrain & Bass. Invoice #134137 will be discussed in executive session.

GIS Engineering, LLC
Inv# 70021127 **Amt. $ 2,035.00**
Engineering services in accordance with Task Order No. 3

Treasurer DePaula made a motion to approve the invoice presented today for payment from GIS Engineering, LLC in the amount of $2,035.00. The motion was seconded by Vice President Roper. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

CN Illinois Central
Inv# 9500287571 **Amt. $3,000.00**
Rent – Private Road Crossing 8/1/26 – 7/31/27

Mr. Dufresne said this was an annual invoice for the gate crossing. Motion was made by Treasurer DePaula, seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach and Secretary Sheridan. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Southeastern Overhead Door Inc.
Inv#23174 **Amt. $4,780.00**
Furnish and install new Genie N4GH101L5 Electric Operator

Mr. Dufresne said another door motor recently broke down (in warehouse building 3) and he will have to order another motor. He said the motors may go down at the same time, as they are all around the same age. Vice President Roper asked how many doors there are and how many he thought may need to be replaced. He said there are 4 doors in building 3 and 5 doors in building 2. Treasurer DePaula made a motion to approve the invoice presented today for payment by Southeaster Overhead Door, Inc. in the amount of $4,780.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schanzbach. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims

Vice President Roper suggested to Mr. Dufresne that he look at the motors and if they are in bad shape replace them and "get ahead of the game." Mr. Dufresne said Premier Chemicals is repairing the motors as needed to get the most use out of them and are replaced when they can't be repaired anymore. Treasurer DePaula asked if the port was paying for the repairs, and Mr. Dufresne said no.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business today.

LITIGATION UPDATE

South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission vs Wilco Marsh Buggies, Inc.
Docket# 20240004367
a) Executive Session

Mr. Coudrain recommended that the commissioners go into Executive Session to discuss the litigation between the Port Commission and Wilco Marsh Buggies. A motion was made by Vice President Roper, seconded by Treasurer DePaula to enter into Executive Session to discuss the litigation, South Tangipahoa Parish Port Commission vs Wilco Marsh Buggies, Inc. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims. The guests were asked to exit the meeting.

Approximately 39 minutes later a motion was made by Vice President Roper, seconded by Secretary Sheridan to return to the open session of the regular meeting. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims.

Mr. Coudrain said in furtherance from the executive session there will be some necessary litigation expenses that will be required to be incurred, and he asked for approval to authorize him to engage persons as necessary and to incur litigation expenses in accordance with his recommendations in Executive Session. Vice President Roper made a motion, seconded by Treasurer DePaula to approve and authorize the port's attorney, Andre Coudrain to engage persons as necessary and to incur litigation expenses in accordance with his recommendations made in Executive Session. Motion passed. Yeas: 6 Ferrara, Roper, DePaula, Sheridan, Davis, Schanzbach Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Sims.

REMARKS

There were no remarks today.

President Ferrara asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Treasurer DePaula made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Vice President Roper. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM.

Rhonda Sheridan, Secretary STPPC Daryl Ferrara, President STPPC